



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
CEDAR CITY DISTRICT  
BEAVER RIVER RESOURCE AREA  
176 East D.L. Sargent Dr.  
Cedar City, Utah 84720



IN REPLY REFER TO:  
UT-044  
3809  
UTU-67116

June 27, 1997

Mr. D. Wayne Hedberg  
Division of Oil, Gas, & Mining  
1594 West North Temple, Suite 1210  
Box 145801  
Salt Lake City, Utah 84114-5801

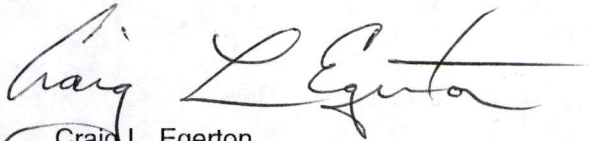
Dear Mr. Hedberg:

This letter is in regards to correspondence, dated May 14, 1997, from Hecla Mining Co. to your Division, requesting plugging of the Escalante Mill tailings pond underdrain. The tailings pond is located entirely on public lands within Secs. 3 & 10, T. 36 S., R. 17 W.

Ed Ginouves of my staff inspected the site on June 26, 1997 to confirm the surface integrity of the tailings cap and measure the flowrate of the underdrain. The tailings pond soil cap has a stable cover of vegetation and no evidence of surface water penetration of the cap was noted. The flowrate of the underdrain was measured at the discharge point at the mill and was found to be 0.5 liters/min. We are satisfied that this extremely low flowrate is an indication that the pore fluids in the tailings pile are essentially drained, and that the tailings pile cap is functioning as designed, and has isolated the tailings from the hydrologic system. It would be acceptable to BLM to plug the underflow drain pipe at this time.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Ed Ginouves at (801) 865-3040.

Sincerely,

  
Craig L. Egerton  
Area Manager